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# The Nassau Literary Magazine

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THE  
NASSAU LITERARY MAGAZINE

VOL. LXI

FEBRUARY, 1906

NO. 7

The Robe of Dreams

I wrought a Robe of fairy woof  
And broidered it with many flowers,  
The fancies of the budding Spring,  
The happy thoughts of idle hours.

I wandered through the poppy fields,  
Along the crystal-hearted streams,  
Until I found behind the hills,  
The Lily Queen of Golden Dreams.

She stood between the day and dark,  
Against a wood of swaying pine ;  
She held me lightly with her hand  
And lightly set her lips to mine.

About her, in a trance of joy,  
I laid the labor of my loom —  
'Twas dusk, a distant waterfall  
Sang softly through the gathering gloom.  
'Twas dawn ; she vanished from mine eyes,  
More swift than shifting light and shade.  
Where she had been, alone remained  
The Robe of Dreams which I had made.

Ah, then I knew the worth of dreams !  
Yea, I was sadder grown and wise,  
For lo ! The flowers wrought thereon  
Had changed to many mocking eyes.

*K. Sawyer Goodman.*

## "Esmeralda"

IT was dusk. Approaching night was shrouding the city in hazy mist. Here and there a shop-keeper was lighting his lamps or taking in his wares. The great bell of St. Agnes sounded the hour. The art classes were being dismissed, and the students clattered down the steps of the Institute with their boxes and sketch-books under their arms.

A man walked slowly along, nodding right and left to acquaintances. Soon a young girl came toward him. He involuntarily paused. She extended her hand to him saying :

"Why, Mr. Carter ! I thought you had left."

"I intended to," he stammered.

"Why haven't you been at the class ? I have been very lonesome without you, for you are the only American I know in all Florence. Where have you hidden yourself ?"

He hesitated.

"Given up 'life' work ?" she ventured.

"No," he answered and paused.

Then he said : "I suppose I might as well tell you. I've spent most of the time at the Casino."

She started. "Oh !" was her answer.

"I really didn't mean to see you today," he continued, "but I only happened along here. I know you will be very much disappointed in your American. News has come from home that has utterly discouraged me. My father has lost everything, so I've had to better my fortunes some way."

"Have you succeeded ?" she asked.

He did not reply, but his face told her the truth.

"I can't tell you how sorry I am, Mr. Carter, but still, I can hardly sympathize with you. You must not go on this way !"

"What am I to do?"

"Is it brave to give up the fight without so much as a struggle? Your talent is far from ordinary. You know the technical points of your line well. Make the best of this misfortune."

"Where to begin?"

She thought some time; then said:

"Begin right here. You have often said I would make a wonderfully fine 'Esmeralda,' and that some day you would make that your masterpiece, if you could get a suitable model. Come, I am willing to pose."

"But, Miss Russell, isn't that asking a little too much of you?"

"Why?"

"Your time is as valuable as mine."

She laughed. "Oh, dear no! I only take these lessons for the fun of it. Aunt is determined we shall spend the winter in Florence, and, as I detest the place, I must have something to do, so I joined the 'life' class. I shall never be an artist. So you see, Mr. Carter, you need have no compunction on that score."

"Oh, if I only could believe it! I feel I can overcome this misfortune — with your help."

At last he accepted her offer, and soon the necessary arrangements were made. He left her at her pension and walked home. The world seemed bright again.

\* \* \* \*

The weeks passed. "Esmeralda" was almost finished. The beautiful canvas stood on an easel in the middle of the studio. Carter lay on a lounge reading a letter in the dim candle light.

"Poor mother!" he sighed. "How concerned she is about me. Dear soul! If she could only know that it is her own sweet self that makes me work so hard. What a surprise it will be to her when I have sold the picture and

sent her the check." He smiled. "The Institute has offered me fifteen hundred dollars for it in the rough and there's no telling what I may get when it's finished. It *is* beautiful," he continued, as he threw himself back on the lounge to admire it.

Thus he let his thoughts run on until, tired out by his hard day's work, he fell asleep.

Suddenly he awoke with a feeling of uneasiness. The studio was dark but for the candle-light. His eyes instinctively sought the picture. It was gone! When he became accustomed to the light, he saw a heap of ashes on the floor under the charred easel. The candle still burned merrily.

\* \* \* \*

The next day when Miss Russell and her aunt came to the studio, the servant told them that Mr. Carter had not yet returned from the Casino.

*Ralph W. Owen.*

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## The Unattainable

The Master Painter paints the skies  
And man looks on in wild surprise.  
Then as of old, with gloating eyes,  
He dreams to be a God, and tries  
To do as God, but trying dies.

*H. Emil Joy '08.*

## Thornton's Lost Opportunity

THERE were a few peculiarities in Thornton's make-up.

One was his sense of humor which had the unfortunate habit of deserting him at critical moments.

Another was his super-sensitiveness to his own actions.

He had also contracted the habit of introspection in early youth, owing to the extreme seclusion of his bringing-up.

Yet he was one of the most cheerful men who ever knew the emptiness of absolute depression, and he was so afraid of taking himself seriously that it became the serious business of his life to avoid it, that is, until he met the Enigma. And then all had changed in a night.

The quizzical, half-cynical look in her brown eyes—and everyone knows brown eyes should either flash or be limpid and trusting—the simplicity, yet perfect taste, in her gowns; these considerations and others which Thornton could not describe made the Enigma utterly unlike any woman with whom he was accustomed to associate.

He had known her for three months—a fortnight of which was passed in the association of a house party. It was after a week-end at the Duncombe's country-place that he communed with himself and reached a conclusion.

"This is a strange circumstance, surely," he said to himself as he mused before the open fire. The wide eyes of an immense moose-head met his, but offered no solution. The *Dua Vana* smiled mockingly at him from the wall. He knew he had a deep affection for the Enigma; not one of those attachments that spring from every little whiff of perfume, but the affection of a manly man that permeated his whole being. Somehow or other he could not dismiss a highly uncomfortable presentiment that he was preparing for a tragedy. What impressed him most of all was the mystery which surrounded her. The mere fact that she had visited the Duncombe's should more than offset this, for

no one in his right senses would think of questioning the stamp of the Duncombe family any more than he would the stamp of the U. S. mint. Still there was no doubt that the Enigma aroused speculation.

So he went on, until the clock on the mantle-piece announced the fact that midnight had come. Finally coming to a conclusion, he could see no reason for delay. He knew that at least six men were in love with her, or thought they were, and that he stood a very good chance of escaping matrimony, despite his most earnest efforts in that direction.

In all his considerations, he had given no thought to Dorothy Sinclair, to whom he had paid some attentions, at one time or another, for most of his life. This was not at all a remarkable fact, for he looked upon her as a jolly and interesting youngster.

In spite of her naturalness and childish gayety, Miss Sinclair had a clear conception of what she wanted in this world, together with a concentration of purpose which, under most circumstances, is entirely admirable. Among these things "wanted" was Thornton. She longed to be freed from parental restrictions and wanted an establishment of her own. She was in love with matrimony in the abstract, and with Thornton in the concrete. He was good looking, generous, intelligent, courteous—and had a comfortable income—what more could any girl expect in a husband?

Events had not disposed themselves in a manner convenient enough for Thornton to carry out his purpose until the night of Mrs. Arthur's masquerade ball, which she gave in honor of her return home after a year's residence in Berlin. It was here that Thornton decided to speak to the Enigma, and it was here that Dorothy Sinclair first learned of his devotion to the former. The masks had been removed, and Thornton had caught sight of her. All even-



ing he had wandered up and down the immense ball room, but not until then had he been able to distinguish the costume for which he had been looking. He danced with her three times in succession ; then proposed a little jaunt into the palm room. She was seated in a brilliantly lighted corner, overhung with a red canopy, the reflection of which tinted her whole costume, and lighted up her naturally beautiful face. To a man with such psychological tendencies, the effect was too much. "I have something to say to you," he said, rather abruptly.

She gathered herself with an air of nonchalance, as if to repel an attack she had invited.

"I have made love to you rather lamely," he declared.

She raised her eyebrows just enough to show the smile in her eyes. "Do you think you have to make love to me?" she inquired.

"Yes, I know I have to make love to you—because I cannot help it." He smiled slightly, but spoke with perfect sincerity.

"I have thought about it for a long time," he pursued, "and it is a familiar subject to me, but I know it must be strange to you. It seems—"

"Very ridiculous," she observed. "Do you usually—"

"Always," returned Thornton, "do you?"

She laughed and turned her clear, brown eyes toward him. She was becoming reconciled.

"Do I understand that you do me the honor to—"

"You do," said Thornton, with emphasis.

"But you don't know anything about me," she persisted.

"If there is anything I ought to know," he said, "I know you will tell me" having in mind the sense of mystery that impressed him. "Besides one never knows about anyone. There is nothing that brings out the verities like the eternal duet. Now it is my good fortune to be in love with you—"

"The old Strauss waltzes are the best, after all," she

said, dreamily, as if she had heard nothing but the music.

"Er—I really thought you were more clever than that," he said with judicial disappointment.

"That is the Miserere," he added. He noticed her eyelids flutter and fall, and a faint flush steal into her cheek. The orchestra ceased, and Thornton accompanied her back into the ball-room, where he sought his next partner.

Dorothy Sinclair had noticed Thornton and Miss Harrington (for this was in reality the Enigma's name) retire into the palm room together and she also had seen them return. This was her opportunity, and she tripped up to the Enigma, as she would to an old acquaintance. "Oh! Miss Harrington, I am so glad that you and Thornton are such good friends." She spoke so unaffectedly and with such apparent sincerity that not a suspicion entered Miss Harrington's mind. There are times when even beautiful young ladies are credulous.

"I have known him all my life," she went on, "and he is just as good as he is charming. I said when I was six that I was going to marry him, and I have never changed my mind."

"Oh! I didn't know—"

"It is one of those tacitly understood things, you know," she explained hastily, as she tripped off on her partner's arm.

Miss Harrington smiled cynically to herself as she observed Thornton, all unaware of what had transpired between Dorothy Sinclair and herself, wandering into the smoking room.

He was received with respect, for he was not one of them. Hanover was talking, and Thornton frowned. Hanover was one of those fops who spend the greater part of their time at resorts where the links are good, and whose specialty, on and off the links, is the mistakes and misfortunes of others.

"She comes of a very good family," Thornton heard him say.

He despised that type of man. He would have taken huge delight in knocking him down, but refrained for common decency; so he did the next best thing.

"Hanover, haven't you a scandal in your own family you can regale us with," he asked. "You would be more likely to know the truth about it." It was a biting remark, and there was a hush.

Hanover attempted to speak, but rage clenched his teeth. He arose, turned on his heel and left the room.

It was not until some days later that Thornton became acquainted with the story Hanover was circulating. It was one of those tales of deadly innuendo, based upon few facts, but it stung Thornton to the quick. For several days he floundered in a grey labyrinth of misery. Gradually he found himself. He was supremely conscious that he loved her, but his good name was dear to him. He also realized the persecution society inflicts upon those who live under the shadow of a scandal, and the sufferings it would cause him if people looked askance at his wife. He judiciously reviewed the whole matter, and finally came to the conclusion which he summed up as follows:

"I love her; that is the important thing. I know that she is worthy of any man's love, and I would be a poor sort of man were I not to stand by her side when evil threatens her, give her the protection of my name, the comfort of my affection, should she want it. And that is the way it shall be if she will."

He had the lawyer's instinct, he gave her the benefit of the doubt, just as an attorney should who is prosecuting a prisoner. The next day he called at her apartments and, when she entered the drawing-room, with that same distant, mysterious air, he felt an extreme hesitancy in addressing her. But the critical moment had arrived, there was no time for hesitation.

"Miss Harrington," he began, rather formally, "since the last time I talked with you, certain things have occurred. Certain facts have been revealed about you which have caused me not a little uneasiness, and—"

"About me?" Her face whitened. "What has been said?"

He told all that he had heard, and when he finished, she smiled and breathed a sigh of relief, as if she were glad he had at last heard it.

"I want you to marry me," he said, rejoiced at the way she took it, "not because of any quixotic notion of chivalry, but because I love you more than anything else in the world." He paused.

"And what about Dorothy?" she asked, finally.

"What about her?"

"She told me you were engaged to her, not formally of course, but that there was a tacit understanding."

"Poor little thing! Well, it will always be tacit."

"But you haven't asked me anything about those stories?"

He didn't hesitate a second. "I did not believe them," he said, frankly. Her face softened, as she said,

"And you were still willing to take me in spite of them. You loved me enough for that?" And then she began to weep softly. "Poor old Jim! He was taken sick two years ago, and his mother, too enfeebled with age to care for him, begged me to take him West and care for him. I did. But he died! People have whispered about it ever since. That is what has made me so reserved, cold at times, and mysterious—but you have come and recognized my innocence—and yet," she added with smiling eyes, "you have lost the great opportunity of your life."

Thornton couldn't see the humor in it, but he forgot all about it when a white hand stole about his neck and a soft cheek was pressed against his.

*George M. Duff.*

## Love of Nature: An American Appreciation.

"There is, after all, no house like God's out-of-doors. It quiets you down, sir, like saying your prayers."

American literature in this, its youth, has been closely akin to the other, older literatures, which have fostered it, and it has been especially bound to that of England. At times, to be sure, we have struck out for ourselves, and some characteristic movements have resulted, but they are exceedingly few. Cooper, Poe, Whitman, each of them started a digression which ended with his death. The only notable production of the last two centuries has been the characteristic American humor. But we are at the present time in the midst of another movement, which in its beginning was connected with English literature. Washington Irving felt its influence, telling of wild stretches of plain, of northern rivers, Fenimore Cooper, of native red-men, Francis Parkman, of Canadian forests; Longfellow, Hawthorne, Emerson all *felt* the witchery of the wild life that was about them, but what did they *do* to find out what this Nature which was aiding their literary art truly was? Wordsworth, receptive, seeking to prove his pantheistic theories, Burns, using his heaven-sent sympathy with the "wee beasties" strictly to teach lessons to men, Walton, dreamer, Keats, maker of lyrics,—how have these men shown us what lies about us, taught us the great lessons of Life which Nature is waiting to teach? Englishmen have sent out explorers and hunters innumerable, yet seem to have exhausted their energy in these physical exertions; in the higher sort of life in "God's out-of-doors" they seem peculiarly slothful. When their writers *have* found the life of Nature lying open around them, they have invariably used it as a means to an end, to illustrate their theories, to help them to higher, ay, and truer, flights of fancy.

With Thoreau, however, appreciation of Nature has literally, a "new birth." Before, Nature had been a very hand-maiden of literature; with him, literature strictly serves Nature. And Thoreau after all, struck at the fundamentals of life. "I went into the woods," he said, "because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and to see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I come to die, discover that I had not lived." But his work consisted but of scattered observations; it was left for his disciple, John Burroughs, to study Nature as part of his life. He has taken up one phase after another, and made them real to us, until the fragrant charm of the woods-path, the vivid idylls of the bird, and beast, and tree, the wild passion of the Snow Storm, come to us like poems.

Henry van Dyke has philosophized and thought and dreamed until he has made the very games of out-of-doors lead to a higher life, "his creel full of trout, and his mind full of grateful recollections of flowers that seemed to bloom for his sake, and birds that sang a new, friendly message to his tired soul, an unearned blessing in his head and heart, his memory and his fancy." The life of this world of his becomes truly personal to him—its very rivers have "lives and characters and voices of their own and are as full of good-will as a sugar-maple is of sap;" we are sure that he has really lived there. Stewart Edward White, on the other hand, has taken up the fighting side of this "playing the game," the red blood, the grit that is in a man when, "with his naked soul he fronts the Wilderness, that he may prove his essential pluck and resourcefulness and manhood."

The study and the story of the peoples that dwell in this new world have been peculiarly appropriated by Ernest Thompson Seton and his following, notably William J. Long. They have drawn for us animal-

romances and animal-tragedies, which show us Nature from the view, one might almost say, of Nature herself. They show us both sides, the savagery as well as the gentleness, of wilderness creatures. "The mother fox who today brings the quick tears to our eyes by her devotion to her little ones, will tomorrow, when they are grown, cast them adrift mercilessly ;" Kagax, the Weasel, the Blood-thirsty, moves about slaughtering in the better world Killooleet, Little Sweet-voice. Bold though these romanticists be in their free treatment of incident, they have at least blazed a new trail for us to follow.

If you will follow these three sets of guides, they will lead you to a land that is truly enchanted. "The odour of a hundred blossoms, and the green shimmering of innumerable leaves, the breath of highland breezes and the song of many birds, and the murmur of flowing streams are in it. Birds dip and sway, advance and retreat, leaves bend and whisper, splashes of sun-light fall heavy as metal through the yielding screens of branches, little breezes wander hesitatingly here and there ; the stream shouts and gurgles, murmurs, hushes, lies still and secret. And there is in you a great leisure, as though the day would never end." There is a magic about the very names of the places that are in it, color, mystery, the vastnesses of unexplored space,—Peace River, the House of the Touchwood Hills, the Land of Little Sticks, Flying Post — until you can see before you the "vast shaggy, sylvan wildernesses which hide the lakes and rivers in the Great North." You can see "the mysterious Lake alive with burnished copper trout, lying hidden and wonderful in the high hills, clear as crystal, shaped like a great crescent whose curves are of haunted forest trees grim and awesome with the solemnity of the primeval ;" you can feel the magic of the Silent Places, fresh and sweet, calm and clear and bright.

There are rivers there, little rivers, "running easily and



merrily and kindly, full of peace and pure enjoyment." You can hear them, if you are very still, talking and singing soft and low and distinct beneath their steady dashing, sounds vanishing swift as tear-forms; there sound, "faint and clear, voices singing, calls, distant notes of laughter as though many canoes were working against the current." You can see the rivers sometimes, through a chance opening in the forest, "down over billows of wavering leaves a single little spot of blue, like a turquoise sunk in folds of green velvet."

Mountains are there, too, alpine, with the flavor of rare mountain air. League after league there is of them, "rising and falling and rising again into ever bluer distance, forest-covered, mysterious; clear peaks, looking down, day after day, upon your joys and sorrows, moderating your passions with its calm aspect." And the Forest everywhere, tasting of sunny roadside banks, and shy openings in the woods, with its birds, and trees, and berries and flowers. The birds and the flowers are there to "satisfy your senses of sight and hearing and smell, the berries, your taste." For the North speaks to you in the voices of three birds, in the hermit—and the woods-thrush, and the ecstasy, the passionate mourning of the white-throated sparrow. In the birds you may read the power of Nature; in the eagle its majesty, in the hawk, its ferocity, its cunning in the crow, its sweetness and melody in the pure gladness of the blue-bird — and its joy in the veery, "pouring out its heart into a long, liquid chant, clear notes rising and falling, echoing and interlacing in endless curves of sound, orb within orb, intricate, wonderful." Flowers are strewn about you lavishly, drooping jewel-weed, trembling hare-bells, flaming-robed cardinal-flower. Berries there are, waiting to be picked, the wonderful woods-berries; blueberries, luscious blackberries, dainty strawberries "that melt on the lips and fill the mouth with pleasure, long,



slender, dark crimson, a concentrated essence of all the pregnant sweetness of the wild-wood, sapid penetrating and delicious, a drop of nectar." And trees hem you in everywhere, "solemn groves of firs and spruces, plumed sierras of lofty pines, the stately pillared forests of birch and beech, the wild ravines, the tremulous thickets of silvery poplar."

At times the Wilderness will seem very dreadful to you, when it grows silent with the brooding uncanny silence of the North, but with "understanding and admiration and sympathy and love you will make the forest your own." The noises of the forest will draw close about you their circle of mystery, but the circle cannot break upon you, for here you will have conjured the homely sounds of kettle and crackling flame to keep ward; the wilderness, untamed, dreadful, is all about you, but this one little spot you will have reclaimed. Little Tookies the woods-mouse will teeter manfully over your shelter; you will be at home.

This is not an artificially graded path strewn with roses to which you are invited, but a rugged trail through the woods or along the beach, where you will now and then get a whiff of natural air, or a glimpse of something to make "the wild blood start in its mystic springs." But as the labor will be great so will the rewards be. Indolent, selfish, tired, taking yourself too anxiously, you may lay your burden down now and then, and cleanse your mind from all the false and foolish things that mar the joy and peace of living. You will find the face of the world new-created for you; a world full of joyful life, where the rivers will welcome you like old friends, where everything grows fresh under your hand. You will be "as the grain of the oak, richer and firmer-grained, rugged and hardy, so that time will but season you:" you will have unflinching the clear steady eye of the woodsman; you will

learn how to be an honest man and a cheerful companion, brave and steady and temperate and hopeful, whatever comes. For you will find there "a more perfect repose, perfect understanding, perfect joy, perfect love of all things that God has made."

So, at last, you will understand the truths which Nature has been striving so long to teach you. For you will know that if you will woo her for her own self, Dame Nature will tell you, unasked, the lessons which those who seek her for their own selfish ends may never know. You will know the plain realities of life,— "that you ought to work before you eat; that after you have done all that you can you must still rely on a mysterious bounty for your daily bread; that life was meant to be uncertain, that it is the part of wisdom to be prepared for disappointments, and grateful for all kinds of small mercies." You will be granted knowledge of the purifying Philosophy of fighting, waiting and peace,—He who would have strength to conquer must strip for the fight, and play fair, that he may fight with might; he who would do a deed worth the doing must have the patience of waiting in this age of unrest, that the deed may ripen and be good, as the Forest waits in patience for the ripening of its own perfect fruits; he who would have peace must learn to rest upon "a Wisdom higher and a kindness greater" than his own, a God over him who, if impartial, is just, and will direct him for the best that is in him.

And if you have read these prophets aright, and learned this lesson which they would teach you, you will feel "the red gods' summons" calling, waking and sleeping, at all times, for you to come. And you will "climb the mountains, and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

*Thomas J. Durell.*

## Ode to Memory

What tones are these, that in a kindly hour  
Do softly steal upon me, and recall  
The scenes of childhood ; thrill me with their power,  
And seem to say that music, best of all  
Can bring back visions of forgotten things ?  
Oh time when wanton life from care was free,  
What are the tones that please mine ear, the while  
They soothe my soul ? What strains doth Memory  
Draw from her golden harp, whose trembling strings  
Throb with the echoes that did once beguile ?

Gay hours of thoughtless youth, so fresh and wild !  
Beneath the spreading branches of the elms  
I wander listlessly, as when a child  
I wandered far a' field amid the realms  
Of Fancy : see the sights and hear the sounds  
That then I heard and saw : and dream again  
The dreams that then were mine : now mine once more.  
A world of fantasy, this world of men !  
The real existence that one which compounds  
Visions, illusions, Time's forgotten lore.

How silently glide on the phantom years !  
How silently ! And yet how swift their pace !  
And how the hallowed Music of the Spheres,  
Replete with truth and beauty, love and grace,  
Seems but to add the touch of melody  
To passing hours ! Then, bursting into song,  
It swells above the sordid things of earth  
In notes sustained or fleeting, borne along  
The quivering air in heavenly harmony,  
And makes the present world of little worth.

This is the charm of Memory that endears.  
What strains of melody their sweetness lend  
To voice a hundred hopes, a thousand fears,  
That in the sacred anthem meet and blend  
And mount aloft to heaven : still to soar  
Until they reach the very throne of God ;  
And there among the choir of angels blest,  
Upon the threshold of His dear abode  
To hymn celestial praise forevermore,  
Or die in sweeter strains at His behest.

Within the cloistered shade of sylvan grove  
I enter reverent ; my head I bow.  
Secure from harm, and nevermore to rove,  
I am at peace, and breathe my fervent vow  
To Memory, Golden Goddess, at whose shrine  
I kneel a suppliant, humble and confessed.  
Yet but a little while, and life is o'er,—  
The friends I loved, the hands I oft have pressed,  
The lips that met in sweet accord with mine,  
The tender tones,—all, gone forevermore.

## The Coward

HIS comrades named him the Bantam when he first came to them. Small, well-built, with a firm mouth, but eyes which seemed—well, rather lady-like, he stood among them squarely, a merry comrade, a “good fellow.”

“Gawd!” breathed the grizzled corporal when the new private stripped for inspection. “I’d like to see that young bantam fight. ’E’ll be a credit to ’is Company, ’e will. ’E goes!”

So that the bullies kept at a respectful distance, and the boy became enthusiastic about a soldier’s life. All that was needed to fill his cup of happiness was one good, stiff fight with the rebels. He confided all his plans to the dear face which lay next his heart, and he watched the proud eyes shine as he told of what he would do when he got the chance. The corporal should see then that he had not been mistaken in him. If only he had a chance!

The chance came. It was only a skirmish but it seemed to the boy that it must be a great battle. He rode in the charge with a sickening fear gripping his throat, and saw through a daze the shining sabres, the choking dust and the blood, heard the sobbing curses and groans. Then, with a mist still in his eyes, he saw a dim giant towering above him with a great sabre that was falling, falling.—He flinched. There was no excuse for it; he flinched, and drew back. And his horse, frightened at the screams, finding that the guiding hand no longer held him straight to the fight, turned and galloped away with his rider swinging dazed in the saddle. So that when the boy came to himself, white and shaking, he found that he was no longer the Bantam of the Company, he was the Coward. But he set his lips straight and rode back to his sweating, swearing comrades to take his medicine like a man.

A trooper from another company had seen the flight and

told the Company, with careful elaborations and bitter jest, of its shame. And the Company's pride was hurt; it had boasted loud of its Bantam, and now it had no mercy. It hurt — *how* it hurt. Never to be able to look a man in the eyes without getting a sneer, to have never a friend where all had been admirers, to be outside it all — he began to seek extra guard-duty, and walked himself so cruelly on the longest beats that he was worn to a shadow of his old self. Then the birds began to mock him — "Coward! Coward!" and he would flee in despair back to the quarters, only to find men's taunts crueller than Nature's. Even the eyes could give him no comfort now, and at times it seemed to the boy that he could endure the torture no longer, that he would have to break and run from it all. But he couldn't do it. The scorn looking into his heart was bad enough as it was; if he should run again he would never be able to look into the eyes again. So he choked back the aches in his throat, and smiled bravely at the sneers — and refused to fight for the insults offered him. He would need all of his fighting blood, he told himself bitterly, when he met the enemy next and wiped out his shame.

And the second chance came. It *was* a great battle this time and the Coward's regiment held the key to victory. They were held in reserve for a time, and they filled their leisure with torturing the blood into the Coward's face. Then a thin grey line of horsemen formed opposite them and moved forward at a trot against their position.

"Men!" said their Colonel, "you will not forget your duty this day. Charge!"

And they moved against the grey line, thundering faster and faster until they met with a ringing crash at the foot of the hill they were guarding. The Coward was afraid again; he knew it in his heart of hearts, and fought his temptation fiercely. Gasping, he cut desperately at

every head which came in view, yet he knew that his treacherous heart and horse were bearing him surely out of the struggle. "God! God!" he prayed, "give me strength," and dashed full into a towering figure in grey, charging, red-eyed, with a tattered pennant swinging at arm's length.

The Colonel, behind them, on his observation-hill, saw the figure too, and paled under his bronze.

"My God!" he gasped. "They've broken through. Those damned cowards of mine are breaking, running, and the whole army's depending on them. Isn't there one man who can stop that leader?"

The Coward clinched with the man in a very frenzy of fear. Boy against man, he fought him to a standstill, and slowly back. He felt that his courage was ebbing away, shut his eyes, gritted his teeth and cut at the man with all the strength that was in him. He snatched the pennant as it fluttered past him, then with wide, horror-stricken eyes looked into the ghastly face with the crimson blood blotting out the dead eyes, sinking toward him. He swayed in his seat, then, mercifully, went down under the rush of his comrades wiping out the shame of flight with merciless slaughter.

"And a boy at that!" said the Colonel, and swore softly to himself.

The Colonel sent orderlies galloping in haste to reform the regiment when it returned, grimy and bloody, filled with the thankfulness of shame turned to glory. And there the Coward still clinging to his tattered trophy, found them, the Colonel in the midst of the straight, pitifully thin lines. The Coward, very white, faced his commander in the midst of his comrades.

"Private John Salter," said the Colonel. "I have never before done that which I am about to do. I have no need to tell you before these comrades of yours what you have done today — that you have saved the honor of a regiment



and most of the lives here before you. If ever a man earned his promotion on the field of battle, you — ”

Then Private John Salter gulped hard for a minute.

“Men,” his Colonel had said. “You will not forget your duty this day.”

The Coward held up his head proudly.

“I’m sorry, sir,” he said, simply, “but I can’t take it. I haven’t earned it. You see, I was scared to death all the time I was doing it; I was *so* scared that I *had* to do it, sir. It’s — it’s pretty hard to tell you all this, but I think — It isn’t so much missing the promotion an’ all that I mind, as it’s — as it’s — ” he stammered helplessly. “So if you please, sir, I can’t take it.”

The Colonel turned from him quickly, then faced his men.

“My lads,” he asked them, “you have heard your comrade — what shall it be? Does this promotion stand, or does it not?”

And they say that at the shout which answered him the rebels across the river, five miles away, trembled.

“Lieutenant,” said the Colonel grimly, and held out his hand. “It stands.”

But the Coward was thinking of a pair of eyes, smiling again, smiling into a full heart.

*Thomas J. Durell.*



## Alfred the Great and Good

**A**LFRED the Great ! So his name is written on the role of fame. But is he not as truly Alfred the Good ? Let us view his relation to some of the events which have resulted in England's present greatness, and try to trace his character in his work. Thus, from his works, and from the writings of those who knew him well, we shall, perhaps, lay bare his very soul, and discover what motives prompted him, and how his thoughts were ever, first of God, then of his people and never of himself. And most important point of all, let us bear in mind the dark age in which he lived ; the preceding centuries of ignorance, and brutishness and vice. For in the light of our twentieth century it is hard to conceive of the obstacles that lay in his way and which he overcame with a sweet and gentle perseverance that only could succeed, with a people just emerging from the semi-barbarous state.

On coming into his kingship Alfred was first confronted by a war with the Danes. The importance of this event can be partly estimated when we realize that Alfred's failure would have set civilization back several hundred years. The Dane was no mean foe and after various vicissitudes of battle and of peace negotiation we find the Saxon king a fugitive in Selwood forest, his forces scattered and his rule in the balance. Northern, Central and Eastern England lay in the grip of the enemy, and Wessex was at their mercy. But did these difficulties daunt him ? Did he give up during this period of despair ? Not he. He raised an army, somehow ; emerged from the fastnesses, conquered the Danish forces under Guthrum and negotiated the truce of Wedmore. Says Frederick Harrison, " This truce was the foundation of Alfred's new settlement of England. It was a momentous date : the civilization, compound races, unity and peace of England, all take their

origin from this settlement, which was as statesmanlike in conception as it was magnanimous in spirit." A great truth lies in these words. Instead of treating his fallen enemies as the victor might have done, he set to work to Christianize them, to make them a part of his kingdom and placed them, as it were, a buffer state between him and the still hostile people of the North. It was one of the gravest crises in England's history, and Alfred rose to the occasion, and England and civilization at large were free to follow out their natural course.

The task did not end here, however, there was a constructive work to be done, and Alfred employed all the energy of his soul and the insight of consummate genius to take care that the new and settled Danish race should not be disturbed or perverted by fresh heathen invaders. To accomplish this he labored to develop a fleet and laid the corner stone of England's present navy, which gave her the honored title, mistress of the sea.

No sooner had he settled Guthrum and his host in East Anglia than he began to restore his desolated land. His treasury was empty; his towns in ruins; civil government paralyzed. But Alfred repopled the waste districts; reorganized justice and rebuilt London. He showed himself in all his policy the same farsighted and organizing creator of a new nation. The Christianized Danes soon learned to look with awe and admiration on his power. He made no attempts formally to annex either Cornwall, Wales, East Anglia or Northumbria, but his paramount influence over all was felt,—the supreme influence of the organic, civilized and progressive kingdom of Wessex. Thus was created a united England, not by conquest, not by fraud—but by wisdom, justice and moral greatness.

While all these reforms were taking place, besides the reconstruction of towns and cities, Alfred set himself the task of rebuilding the abbeys, churches and schools, and of reviving the learning and religious zeal, which he com-

plains had "sad to say, almost died out." "Formerly," the king writes bitterly, "men came hither from foreign lands to seek for instruction, and now when we desire it, we can only obtain it from abroad. Why when I began to reign, I cannot remember one priest south of the Thames who could render his service book into English." For the revival, therefore, and spread of religion among the people he used the best means he knew of, and besides founding monasteries and churches, he did his utmost to obtain good bishops and clergymen, gathering around him from all sides, learned men, regardless of race.

For his own part, at the age of thirty-eight he learned Latin and translated into Anglo-Saxon vernacular several famous books for the instruction and the uplifting of his people, and commenced the translation of the Bible. But above all, he strove to practice the things he taught to others. "Religion, indeed," says Green "was the groundwork of Alfred's character. His temper was instinct with piety. Everywhere throughout his writings that remain to us, the name of God, the thought of God, stir him to outbursts of ecstatic adoration." Here is his *Te Deum*, "One Creator there is without any doubt, and He is the ruler of heaven and earth and of all creatures, visible and invisible, God Almighty. Him serve all things that serve, they that know Him and they that know him not, they that know they are serving him and they that know it not. He hath established unchanging habits and natures and likewise natural concord among all His creatures, even as He hath willed, and for as long as He hath willed; and they shall remain forever." In these words are breathed, indeed, the soul of a saint.

"So long as I have lived," said the king as life closed about him, "I have striven to live worthily." Little by little men came to realize what such a life of worthiness meant for the world, and to see in Alfred a man of a nobler

stamp than themselves, one who could forget self and devote his life to the benefit of others. Again we quote Mr. Harrison, "The king's warriors and statesmen too often bring divisions of nations, creed and school of opinion, The Richelieus and the Cromwells, the Fredericks and the Bonapartes, even the Turgots and the Washingtons have left some memories of strife and defeat behind them. His memory is one record of unsullied beneficence, of piety without superstition, of valor without cruelty, of government without oppression."

Thus Alfred lived and wrought; Alfred of whom Gibbon the historian writes, "Amidst the deepest darkness of barbarism, the justice of an Antoninus, the learning and valor of a Caesar and the legislative spirit of a Lycurrgus, were manifested in this patriotic king." If the sphere of his action seems too small to justify the comparison with the few whom the world owns as its greatest, he rose to their level in the moral grandeur of his life. If his field of action was limited and obscure, that too but makes a part of his glory: for of all the rulers who have been styled "the great," there is no one to whom the title has been given with more general acclamation than to this king of the West Saxons. His fame transcends that of most conquerors, although he won it all by what he did for his own subjects and within his own petty principality; for probably no king ever did more for his country than he, if we measure what he accomplished by his means and difficulties. And to him we add to that title Alfred the Great, Alfred the Good.

## The Ride of The Mavericks

"There are two kinds of cross-country riders —" reflectively observed Wally Twichell, Master of the Lost Brook Hounds, "Those who ride for the love of the game and those who consider a hunt merely an opportunity for a steeplechase. The "Mavericks" were steeple-chasers pure and simple, and were the bane of my life for a long time."

Some one had used the word "Maverick" in connection with a certain rider in the hunt that afternoon and I was trying to find out what the term might mean. Jim Stoughton had referred me to the M. F. H., my host, and to him I had come, seeking enlightenment. I found him sitting on the veranda, smoking an after dinner cigar.

"We called them the 'Mavericks' because they owned no master," went on Wally. "They were utterly lawless in their manner of riding, seeming to think that the hunt was run solely to give them a chance to race each other over fences and ditches. The wonder of the whole thing is that they did not kill half the pack and themselves into the bargain, with their tom-fool actions. Let's see, there were Bob Geer, Jimmy Carter, Waldon Field and his guest, a man named Windsor, Emory Elston, Edward Seabury, Harry Wickersham and a few others. Altogether they were as fine a lot of horsemen as any club could show — knew the game and were finished horsemen, except for their racing inclinations. Everyone liked and was glad to ride with them but after they had ridden down a couple or two of hounds on the way to covert and on the run, I grew tired of their foolishness and asked them to stop it. They promised to be good — and were up to their old tricks on the very next run. So I decided to give them a lesson, and, after a conference with the huntsman, announced an extra run for a day when I knew that they would all turn out.

The meet was at Wendell's farm and, sure enough, the "Mavericks" were out in full force, in an otherwise small field. At the next meet I quietly told the other riders what was going to happen and they all agreed with me that I was taking the right course and offered their help. At three sharp we started for the covert, the "Mavericks," as usual, larking their horses over all the fences we came to. The covert drew blank, as I had intended, and we went on to the next. Hardly had we thrown the hounds in than they challenged and were off, running breast-high on a burning scent. The field strung out after them, with the "Mavericks" pressing me hard. At the first check I warned them about it but it was of no use. As soon as we had picked up the line again they were at it once more, taking the highest panels, racing over soft country and acting like a pack of fools generally.

So it went, until the fox supposedly went to earth in Dayton's woods. We had had a pretty stiff gallop over rough country and the field was narrowed down to some extent, leaving the "Mavericks" and a few old timers who wished to see the end of the fun. I went into cover, ostensibly to help the huntsman rouse out the fox, the second whipper-in having gone to grass a short way back. Soon we were in full cry again and headed at right angles to the former line, straight for some very trappy country. I softly thanked Providence that my lieutenants had done their work so well. We made a long detour and finally wound up at Dayton's wood again. There was a short check, again I assisted the huntsman and off we went, with the "Mavericks" reduced in numbers, lagging a bit but still game. Bob Geer, Wickersham, and Windsor had fallen by the wayside and only Captain Holsman, an English friend of Stoughton's, were left of the "regulars." Waldon Field rode up to me and asked what kind of an animal we were hunting. Said it had the speed and en-

duration of a racing automobile. At that I could hardly keep from giving the whole thing away and was glad that just then we came to a long check. We were quite a while picking up the line and while the huntsman was making his cast, Jimmy Carter came over to me.

"Wally," said he, "the fellows are about ready to quit. They're all dead tired and their horses are blown to the limit. They want you to whip off and let the beast go. There's no use killing the hounds and horses chasing a timber-wolf and this can't be anything else. No fox could keep it up for half a day without being killed. Be a good fellow and call it off."

"Jimmy," I replied, "you fellows have been bragging about your horses and your riding since the season opened and I really thought there was something back of it. I'm surprised, to say the least. However, if the crowd wants to quit, I'll whip off."

Back he goes to the rest of his kind and they started a confab. Then the pack got the line again and stopped the discussion. We led off straight for that trappy country again and the way those Mavericks went to grass was a caution. They were strung along the course like mileposts. Even the Englishman went off, as his horse got tangled up in the top rail of a stake-and-ridered fence, being too tired to carry it. Finally only Waldon, the huntsman, and myself were left. We went on for a few minutes, then at the next check I had the pack whipped off, and we started home. At that Waldon began to smell a rat and asked me for the truth. I told him and incidentally gave him a very nice lecture on the evils of racing to hounds. At first he was inclined to be angry about it but at last came around to my way of thinking and promised to help convert the rest of the "Mavericks." By the time we reached the clubhouse he was quite enthusiastic about it, picked up others as they limped in and they held a kind of a meeting



on the spot. What they did I don't know but that evening they all apologized very humbly, promised to reform and did so. From that time on, I never had the least trouble with them and they are now the pride of the hunt, while to call one a "Maverick" is to court trouble.

"But how did you do it?" I asked in amazement.

"Nothing simpler," replied the wily Master, "In the first place, there was no fox — at least no loose fox—run that day. The huntsman and I worked it all out beforehand and had a couple of grooms take two of the kennel foxes out on a chain, lay a good line over the country we had decided on and come home. It was all cut and dried beforehand and worked out like a charm."

"But your horse, and the huntsman's, and the pack?" I asked.

"We went to the meet with only half the pack — had the rest in Dayton's woods, together with remounts for the huntsman and myself. We chose hunters as near alike in color and conformation as we could find, kept our mouths shut and rode the "Mavericks" off their feet. All very simple. My cigar's finished, so I say we go to bed."

And to bed we went.

*Sterling Morton.*



## Aftermath

### IDLE THOUGHTS—ON LETTERS AND LETTER-WRITING

The writing of letters is at present nearly a lost art, and letters now show, in the main, either ignorance, hypocrisy or contempt. All show haste. Two causes have, to a large extent, been instrumental in bringing about this state of affairs; first, the perfection of modern postal facilities, and, second, the general atmosphere of hurry in which we moderns live. In the old days, when the receipt of a letter was an event and its sending a matter calling for a considerable expenditure of money and time, letters were composed with a carefulness of thought and wording which is unknown to us nowadays. Then posts were few, the rates were high and the transmission, even of important documents, slow and uncertain. No one could tell into what hands a letter might fall and, in consequence, communication, were much less free and unrestrained in the expressions of opinion than they are now. But even today the old maxim; "Never put anything in a letter which you would be ashamed to see in print," should be strictly adhered to.

A letter—putting aside business communications—purports to be a substitute for a personal meeting of two persons, friendly or otherwise, but lacks, because of its inanimate character, that play of feelings and emotions, that delicacy of tone and manner which means so much in face to face conversation and contributes so greatly to a proper understanding of what is said. The elasticity of language readily gives rise, when the words are written, to misunderstandings—misunderstandings which would be impossible were the same words spoken. To guard against

such a fruitful cause of disagreement and unhappiness, the greatest care must be used in the precise choice and the nice selection of the words which express fully what one means — and which allow of no misconstruction.

To be able to write a really good letter is a great accomplishment. Care in composition, care in revision, elimination of all that is not sure to be of interest to the person addressed and, above all, a straightforward, unhesitating presentation of one's own self, are the essentials to a good letter — a letter which not only informs and instructs but which also calls vividly to mind the manner, personality, and even the appearance of the writer. He who can write a letter of this description is indeed blessed.

*Sterling Morton.*

### The Maker of Verse

We've drunk to our love,  
We've drunk to our land ;  
With a boast, while our lips formed a curse,  
We've drunk to our foe  
With a sword in his hand—  
Now a toast to the Maker of Verse !

A toast to the Maker of Verse ! (Stand up.)  
And while we the circle keep,  
Let every man press his lips to the cup,  
And every man drink it deep.

As soldiers, we've fought  
With the best of the earth ;  
As voyagers, wandered it o'er ;  
In revel and rout  
And in boisterous mirth,  
We've conquered in love and in war.

Then lift up your glasses  
And toss the wine down.  
We're some of us better, some worse  
Than the rest of our fellows :  
But come let us drown  
All our cares in a toast to the Maker of Verse.

A toast to the Maker of Verse ! Let's drink  
To the poet, who once on a time,  
Did sing of our deeds. Let the glasses clink.  
A toast to the Master of Rhyme !

*Thos. C. Pears, Jr.*

### THE GREAT WHITE STAG

The snow lay deep on the mountain side. The winds played a hundred little tricks on the stupid old pines. But down in the heart of the wood all was still, except when a stray gust wandered in to remind one of the tumult without. The logs were heaped high, and the tree trunks were ruddy in the glow. Two men leaned far over the fire. One was preparing food, the other threw loose boughs on the flames. A third came toward them from thicket.

"Have you room for me," he asked.

The first turned.

"You are well met, friend," he said, "Come, sit down and let this goodly fire nurse your weary body."

"Oh you are good to take me in," replied the third.  
"The journey has been long, and the hardship great."

The second arose from where he crouched before the fire and offered the stranger food and drink.

When they had eaten and drunk, the first spoke :—  
"We three are strangers, made friends by circumstance.  
To while away the time, let each one tell his story."

"Agreed !" the others said. "It is strange to find men

in so wild a place. Their stories must be good to hear."

"Then you that have last come, tell us what you do in this desert place."

The stranger smiled. "I am an artist, friends," he said, "I live far to the southward in the land of sunshine."

"We, too, are from the south."

"My story is but brief," the artist continued. "There came to our villiage once a wise man who told me of the North where dwells a mighty Stag. It is a mighty stag of thirty tines and has a coat as white as new-fallen snow. So great grew my desire to see the Stag, that I might paint him and thus give the world a likeness of so beautiful a thing by which all might be ennobled,—so great, I say, grew my desire, that I have come — braved snow and cold and climbed this mountain high. Upon the summit there I seek the Stag."

The first arose.

"I also seek that Stag," he said. "But I shall watch his mighty stride, his stately gait and easy carriage, and write a poem in which the world may see him as his living self, not as a painted, lifeless thing."

The other spoke.

"Be friends. Quarrel not but listen to me. I am a mighty hunter — famed afar. I too have come to find the Stag. But I shall slay him — strike him down, for only thus can he be shown to the world. Your feigning gives but a semblance of the real.

"Nay!" cried the artist. "You shall not kill so lovely a creature. I shall paint him and thus shall the world see him."

"Nay!" said the poet, "by my pen shall he be made to live before the world."

"You would not rob me of my game?" asked the hunter. He raised his hand as if to smite them in his wrath.

But suddenly a soft sweet stillness filled the air like that

which follows after tender song, and suddenly a light shone forth throughout all the forest. Before them rose a glorious, dazzing light which blinded them, so that they fell to the ground and buried their faces in the shining snow.

A moment only did it last. Then it was gone.

"Comrades, it was the great white Stag," they whispered.  
"Our search is over."

*Ralph W. Owen.*

#### Pierrette

I asked one little boon of Love, and Love  
Took all I had,  
And gave me nothing in the place thereof.  
Yet was I sad?

Ah no! I laughed a little and made Rhymes  
To thee, Pierrette;  
Yet, though I love again a thousand times,  
Shall I forget?

*K. S. G.*

#### FISHING

"Any luck?" he asked, his boyish face beaming with enthusiasm. "I've caught some fine ones, over there under the lea of that little island."

"Wal now, ye don't tell me youngster. An' ter think, here I've been a settin' all mornin', an' been a fishin' all my life, an' not know enough ter go over ter that island.

An' you ketchin' fish an' a-beatin' me out that-a-way. Wal thar's nothin' like young blood — "

"But have'nt you got *any*?" persisted the other, "I saw you with something on, a while ago."

"Must hev been bottom," mused the old man. "Let's see yer ketch." The boy held up the biggest of his small mouth.

"He must weigh two pounds," he said proudly; and then suddenly, as he caught sight of something flapping up in the bow of the old man's boat — "My eye! What a beauty. A f—i—v—e pounder — "

"I expaict I ought-er been a-fishing over yonder, by that *thar* island," commented the other.

*J. Nevin Sayre.*

## Editorial

The first actual practical test of the Preceptorial System was the Midyear Examinations. The results of these show that the usefulness of the System in raising the general standard of work and in aiding the average man to a better understanding of his subjects has hardly been overestimated. In some departments this has been particularly noticeable while in others the benefit is not so apparent.

Now it would seem to be not out of place here to indicate one or two of the minor defects, as seen by undergraduate eyes, which are necessarily incident upon the first essay of a scheme so wholly new not only to this University but to all similar institutions in the country. In the first place it is a generally recognized fact, among the students and, we think, not unsuspected by many of the Faculty, that in most if not all of the reading courses for upperclassmen the reading required was much too extensive. This may not have been true of each individual course but it is certain that the aggregate of reading of at least any five courses which a man might elect was so large that to conscientiously fulfill the whole requirement it would have taken him from six to nine hours a day of steady, solid reading outside the time spent in class room and conference. In addition to this work set by the Professor, a Preceptor naturally often marks a reading or some subject for special study on which to write a report or a theme. This practice is entirely in accord with the spirit of the system but in view of it would it not have been well for some of the heads of courses to have cut their requirements slightly in order to lessen the strain a little? In fact this was done in some courses

but it was not done generally enough nor, even in those courses where it was done, extensively enough.

It is very well to say that it is a good thing for a man to have a little more reading to do than he can accomplish, in other words an ideal a little beyond his reach in order to keep him working hard but when the point of sufficient nearness to this ideal is a variable quantity depending on the various judgments of several different Preceptors it is inevitable that some will get through with a minimum of work while others will be driven pretty hard.

This is not meant to imply that any favoritism was shown to certain men by certain Preceptors but merely to show the inevitable discrepancy in quantity and kind of work required. Nor do we think that the personal element should be entirely subordinated; it is undoubtedly true that some men can do more work than others on account of their superior ability or industry and that some should be made to do more on account of their laziness, but it does seem advisable that, where practically the same course is being given, and the same examination is being prepared for, under different men, a rather more exact form of marking should be set than appears in many cases to have been employed last term.

The duty of the Preceptor, it is well understood, is in no sense that of exclusively preparing or "cramming" a man for examinations, but neither does it seem right that he should require of the men under his charge such close attention to a particular phase of a subject as to exclude a comprehension of that subject as a whole or enforce a neglect of those points dwelt on by the lecturer and certain to appear upon the final examination; yet if we are to place any credence in campus talk this was not infrequently done last term.

It is of course not probable that many men of first class standing would suffer much from this, for most of these have



the initiative and independence to select for themselves the important points of a course, and the specializing by a Preceptor on one point would be wholly beneficial. It is not, however, for the high-stand man that we are primarily concerned but for the individual who is more or less short-sighted and willing to be led by the nose, being unable to go any farther into a subject than his Preceptor can shove or drag him. It is this man who suffers most by such an oversight and it is he who most needs, for actual passing of the course, a helping, guiding hand; the lazy man is usually clever enough and needs only a touch of the spur.

All this has been said, not with any idea of depreciating the merits of the System or the valuable assistance, both internal and external, which it has given the University, but rather to set forth some of the thoughtful, fair minded criticisms which this first term of its workings has given rise to among the undergraduates and which there is little opportunity for expressing elsewhere in so concrete a form.

As has been said before in these pages we believe thoroughly in the Preceptorial System and the way in which it has sustained its recent test has only strengthened this belief in the minds of all interested in its success. The defects here mentioned are not in any sense radical ones but they are capable of adjustment and correction and it would seem that no harm could come of these few suggestions, while they may possibly offer a new point of view to those carefully considering the working of the System and investigating its effects.

## Gossip

It is hardly within the province of the Gossip to take up the Preceptorial System for the purpose of treating it in a critical light, but being a candid person and interested deeply in the success of the scheme he cannot refrain from making one or two remarks in connection with it, as he sees it. There can be no doubt whatever that there has been more work accomplished by the Student Body in general during the past term, than in any previous term within the memory of the present generation. There can be no doubt that the eyes of all persons interested in Educational Development have been drawn to us and our affairs. It is certain that many men heretofore little interested in their work have been enabled to find something vital to them, by means of the increased attention given to individuals. So much for the manifest advantages of the System, there are many more, but we have not the space to consider them.

Most of the drawbacks arise, we believe, from "incompatibility of temperament" a phrase made familiar to us in most of our daily papers by its connection with divorce proceedings. To be more explicit, the Gossip means that many of the men have been assigned to Preceptors who are incapable of understanding them either by reason of widely differing mental sympathies, or because their personalities clash. In such cases the breach widens according to the degree of misunderstanding, from the first preceptorial meeting, throughout the term until it ends in a hopeless jumble, which too often results in the debarment of the student and considerable hard feeling on both sides. It is very difficult to fix any blame for this state of affairs on either party or upon the system; all three are in a measure to blame. One thing however is perfectly obvious; that the great mass of the men in college who used to sit up in class and calmly answer "unprepared" are in hot water with either one or more of their preceptors and have had to face debarment from examinations or an unexceedingly low term mark. Now most of these men have fallen into line, in the new order of things, with a certain degree of conscientiousness, they have done a great deal more work than they ever did before and have gone to their preceptorial meetings with this much

preparation at least, that they have in most cases done their required reading. We are honestly inclined to believe that each of these men has got more out of his courses, (or would have done so with sympathetic handling) than he did last year, and yet there has been more fear and trembling, more groaning and gnashing of teeth than usual connected with the mid-year examinations. But let this pass. It seems as if a Preceptor, when he feels that he is out of touch and sympathy with a man, ought to make a more determined effort to make that man's work easy, interesting and pleasant for him, rather than to attempt to inspire him with the dread of debarment, or, by talking "over his head," to produce an antipathy which leads to the cutting of hours and a lack of interest. If a Preceptor fails to get any results out of a man who is not absolutely stupid, let him hand him over to someone else who might have more sympathy with his particular nature. And thus give the man a fair chance to "find himself." In conclusion the Gossip would like to make a very brief plea for some means whereby a man who has conscientiously and thoroughly done his work, day by day, and week by week, might be exempted from formal term examinations covering an extended period of time and an amount of work too large to be handled well as a whole. Let this be done by a series of tests or a series of written reports governed by the Honor System, (which is too valuable to be left out of any such scheme,) or by any other equally satisfactory means. Also the Gossip would like to call attention to the over abundance of reading *required* during the last term, there has been on this account a strong temptation toward superficiality. Let there be less stress laid upon the *required* reading and more upon the *recommended*, for those able to do it. These concessions could do no harm, as far as it is within the limited ability of the Gossip to judge, and from the undergraduate point of view they would be invaluable as inducements to work conscientiously performed from day to day, which after all is the best kind of work

## Editor's Table

In reading over the Exchanges this month we were greatly impressed with the number of stories that dealt with subjects which, if not gruesome, were at least extremely disagreeable. We read for instance, of a man afflicted with horrible visions, who imagined that he was slowly being devoured by myriads of worms. Another tale told the pleasant experiences of a very cheerful individual who playfully cut out some one's eyes in order to experiment upon them. Now, for those who care for such things or are otherwise morbidly disposed, stories like these may be very entertaining, but it seems to us that is it always possible to find subject matter for a good story without entering the realm of the bizarre and the unnatural. It requires exquisite skill and delicacy of treatment to prevent a story, which does lie in this realm, from becoming morbid and revolting, and it is just this skill which college writers usually lack. They pile on the horrors. They invent new terrors. Like the proverbial ten-twenty-three melodramas, they try to create any number of thrills a minute. They express themselves in absurd phrases and heap these phrases together. Especially is this true of those stories which deal with the supernatural. Here the writers strain after startling effects, and all they succeed in doing is to expose their artificiality. In attempting to describe what is more than natural, they become less than natural. And the result of all this frenzy is—simply weariness of the flesh for any one who is compelled to read it. Why, oh why must college writers always fly to realms they know not of, nor any one else knows of for that matter. Many times we have made a plea for the natural story, the story dealing with those subjects which lie within the actual range of the writer, the story which is laid among scenes to which the writer is accustomed. We do not mean necessarily those stories which, when nearly completed, have the local color slapped on with a paint brush. The stories we mean and of which we would like to see more, are the simple, healthy, natural stories which please because they seem to be sincere attempts to picture the truth as the writers see it.

The story entitled "The Joy of Life" in the Randolph Macon Monthly is one of extreme interest and contains several powerful

passages. Unfortunately the author is too much given to startling expressions, and the last sentence is utterly revolting in its disregard of all the laws of good taste. Otherwise the story shows much promise of good work to come.

We wish that the author of "The Trial of Ambition" in the University of Virginia Magazine had made a little more of the situation he has created. The story is well-written, the character of the chief figure in it is capitally drawn, and the reader naturally feels an interest in the outcome of his dishonored career. But, just at the moment of greatest interest, the author concludes the story with the conviction and death of the hero. It disappointed us because the story was too good to end lamely.

The essay on "Men and their Books" in the Bowdoin Quill is the kind of essay that we, for our part, like to read. It is written in an easy, chatty style and is neither too trivial nor too profound.

We are always sure of finding some excellent work in the William's Literary Magazine and this number is no exception to the rule. The stories "The Mercies of God" and "The Mission of Pietro's Amatis" are both capital tales written with a finish and delicacy not often found in college stories. "The Hill Spirit" is an excellent bit of verse, and the essay on "Laureate of the Gentle Heart" is one which is well worth reading.

The "Squire and Dickie" in the Yale Courant shows real skill in narration. The half-serious, half-bantering style is well maintained, and the character of Dickie, the rector, is cleverly drawn.

We quote the following from "The Destiny of the South" in the Southern Collegian.

"She (The South) placed her foot upon the foundation of truth, and, grasping the cords of courage, rose from her prostrate condition. Steadily and firmly she mounted the deck of progress and moved out into the tide of civilization and took her place beside those who had expected to see her submerged beneath the waters of misfortune." Help!!

## Book Talk

A few months ago the writer had the pleasure of hearing a charming and instructive lecture on "Southern Poets and their Poetry," in which the speaker devoted no inconsiderable portion of his time to Sidney Lanier, speaking briefly of his life and reading several of his poems. This was the beginning of an interest in that "Sweet Singer of the South" which has steadily increased and ripened into genuine admiration and appreciation. It was with no little pleasure, therefore, that he received for review a copy of *THE LIFE OF SIDNEY LANIER*, by Edwin Mims. This book was written at Trinity College, Durham, North Carolina, by a man who had at his fingers' ends all the material for an accurate historical record and who had, at the same time, that personal acquaintance with the poet and his family which is so necessary to a sympathetic biography. It is enlivened by many of the poet's private letters, and selections from his poems are generously distributed throughout its pages.

(Sidney Lanier, by Edwin Mims, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.50.)

It is too often the fate of books on history that they serve to bolster up our libraries, to fill in, rather than to afford us any real satisfaction. In the case of the work below-mentioned, the blame will rest on the reader if he fails to get a real and permanent satisfaction from it. *AMERICAN POLITICAL HISTORY*, by Alexander Johnson, edited by Prof. Woodburn, is a most interesting narrative of the political fortunes of the United States. The author deals with our government's history from the Revolution to the period of Reconstruction. It was a time when our system of government was on probation, and at the end of which it had proved itself good. The story of this proving is told plainly and comprehensively. It is peculiarly readable, not only because of the vital importance of the questions involved, but also because of the manner of presentation. The chapters on "Political Parties," "The American System," "Compromises in American History" and "Reconstruction" are especially good.

The history is in two volumes and is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

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An attractive little holiday book, which came to our table too late for earlier review, is *THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS*, by Dr. Henry van Dyke. It is composed of three short essays and two prayers in verse, all of which are full of that sweet and tender imagery so well remembered by those who have read *THE STORY OF THE OTHER WISE MAN* or the other books in which Dr. van Dyke has dealt in his own intimitable way with religious topics. (*The Spirit of Christmas*, by Henry van Dyke, Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y. 75 cts.)

Everyone in the University was more or less interested some-time ago by the contest held in the gymnasium between the exponents of the Japanese and of the American system of wrestling. *JIU-JITSU* was demonstrated for us to our complete satisfaction, and while most of us are still "wedded to our idols," so far as the American system is concerned, the study and practice of the foreign art has by no means fallen into desuetude. To such men as are interested, the book recently published by H. Irving Hancock will be of inestimable value. It contains over 500 illustrations from life and all the necessary directions for the practice of the tricks. (*The Kano Jiu-Jitsu*, by Hancock and Higashi, G. P. Putman's Sons New York. \$4.50.)